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Serial No. 10/699,460

September 6, 2005

Reply to the Office Action dated May 4, 2005

Page 9 of 11

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

Claims 33-60 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, Applicants AMEND claims 33, 44, and 51 and the Specification and CANCEL claims 1-32 and 61-68.

Applicants greatly appreciate the Examiner's indication that claims 36-39 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The Examiner objected to claims 44 and 51 for allegedly reciting features that lack antecedent basis. Applicants amended claims 44 and 51 to correct these minor informalities noted by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to claims 44 and 51.

The Examiner rejected claims 33-35, 40, 41, 43-47, 51-53, and 56-60 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Gotoh et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0149017). The Examiner rejected claims 48 and 49 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gotoh et al. The Examiner rejected claim 42 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gotoh et al. in view of Yamazaki et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,608,232). The Examiner rejected claims 50, 54, and 55 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gotoh et al. in view of Yamazaki et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0197785). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections of claims 33-35 and 40-60.

Applicants amended claim 33 to recite:

"A method for manufacturing a semiconductor film, comprising the steps of:

(a) forming an amorphous semiconductor layer on an insulative surface;

(b) adding a catalyst element capable of promoting crystallization to the amorphous semiconductor layer and then performing a first heat treatment so as to crystallize the amorphous semiconductor layer, thereby obtaining a crystalline semiconductor layer;

(c) performing a first gettering process to remove a first group of semiconductor compounds of the catalyst element from the semiconductor layer; and

(d) performing a second gettering process that is different from the first gettering process to a second group of semiconductor

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Serial No. 10/699,460

September 6, 2005

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Page 10 of 11

**compounds of the catalyst element from the semiconductor layer;**  
wherein

**the first and second groups of semiconductor compounds of  
the catalyst element are different from each other.” (emphasis added)**

Applicants' claim 1 recites the method steps and features of "performing a first gettering process to remove a first group of semiconductor compounds of the catalyst element from the semiconductor layer," "performing a second gettering process that is different from the first gettering process to a second group of semiconductor compounds of the catalyst element from the semiconductor layer," and "the first and second groups of semiconductor compounds of the catalyst element are different from each other."

The Examiner has alleged that Gotoh et al. teaches each of the method steps recited in originally filed claim 33. Gotoh et al. teaches two method steps of gettering:

(1) implanting P ions in certain regions **17 to getter Ni** in regions not implanted with P ions **14** (paragraph no. [0099]); and

(2) forming an oxide film **18** on the regions not implanted with P ions **14** by heating, which **getters the remaining Ni** into the oxide film **18** (paragraph no. [0101]) (emphasis added).

That is, Gotoh et al. clearly teaches two method steps of gettering the single element Ni and fails to teach or suggest any method step or steps for gettering different compounds of Ni.

Applicants' amended claim 33 requires two method steps that getter different compounds of the catalyst element. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that Gotoh et al. fails to teach or suggest the method steps and features of "performing a first gettering process to remove a first group of semiconductor compounds of the catalyst element from the semiconductor layer," "performing a second gettering process that is different from the first gettering process to a second group of semiconductor compounds of the catalyst element from the semiconductor layer," and "the first and second groups of semiconductor compounds of the catalyst element are different from each other."

**BEST AVAILABLE COPY**

Serial No. 10/699,460

September 6, 2005

Reply to the Office Action dated May 4, 2005

Page 11 of 11

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 33 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Gotoh et al.

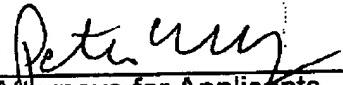
Furthermore, Applicants respectfully submit that the prior art of record, applied alone or in combination, fails to teach or suggest the unique combination and arrangement of elements recited in claim 33 of the present application. Claims 34-60 depend upon claim 33 and are therefore allowable for at least the reasons that claim 33 is allowable.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance are solicited.

To the extent necessary, Applicants petition the Commissioner for a ONE-month extension of time, extending to September 6, 2005 (September 4, 2005 falls on a Sunday, and September 5, 2005 is a Federal Holiday), the period for response to the Office Action dated May 4, 2005.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-1353.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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